Operation APOLLO

Canadian Observations on
Operations in Afghanistan
February – July 2002

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

This Presentation

- Presents Unclassified Materials
- Opinions Presented Herein are of a Personal Nature and May Not Necessarily Reflect Those Of the Canadian Forces

Dedicated To

All 89 Strathconas who deployed to Kandahar

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Outline

- The Canadian Ground Contribution to Op ENDURING FREEDOM
- Operations
- Observations

The Canadian Ground Contribution to Op ENDURING FREEDOM

- Light Infantry Battalion Group (850 pers)
  - 3 Rifle Companies
  - Light Armour Reconnaissance Company
  - Engineer Company
  - HHC
    - Recce Platoon
      - Snipers
    - Mortars
    - TOW
  - National Support Element

Afghanistan

Twelve Times Zones and Several Centuries Removed from Canada

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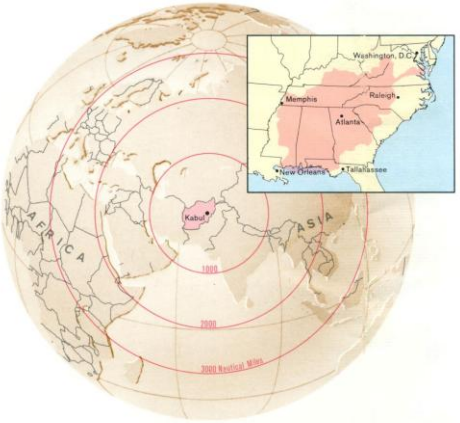

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Our New Home in the Desert

- Movement from CA done via combination of Contract and USAF (primary) Aircraft to Germany
- Final Leg into Kandahar was on USAF Aircraft

Threats – Taliban/Al Qaeda

- Sniper/Incursion Attacks
- Ambushes
- Rocket/Mortar Attacks
- The Threat of Mines

Threats - Debris of War

- An Ever Present Threat

Threats – The Neighbours

- Taliban/Al Qaeda in Detainee Facility
- “I wonder what property values are like living next to a Maximum Security Prison”

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Threats – The Environment

- Leshmaniasis
- Snakes and Insects

Operations

- Defensive Operations
  - KAF
  - Quick Reaction Force
- Offensive Operations
  - Op HARPOON (AAslt)
  - Op GREY HUSKY (Ground)
  - Op TORRI (AAslt)
  - Op CHEROKEE SKY (Ground and AAslt)

Observations

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Observations – Full Integration

- As a Coalition Partner, US Military Did Not Hold Back
  - Access to US Resources
  - An Amazing Experience

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Observations – Firepower

- Modern Sensor Systems Provide Outstanding Capabilities right down to Soldier Level
  - Night Vision Gear for the Soldier
    - Mated with appropriate pointers or designators
  - Thermal Observation Systems. Our weakness
    - Outside the Reconnaissance Company, thermal was limited to our Platoon Anti-Armor Systems
  - Vector Binoculars
  - Designators
  - All-weather sensors (dust and night) and shooters

Observations – Firepower

- There Are Never Enough Long Range Shooters
  - As the Enemy's stand off capability increases, so does our requirement to respond appropriately, using either patrolling or firepower and observation (or a combination of both)
    - 25mm Cannon, Anti-Armor, Snipers
      - Get standoff to degrade accuracy
    - For the Infantry the deliberate application of long range fires is an outstanding force multiplier (.50 or 7.62 mm). We need more:
      - But Marksmen or Sharpshooters appropriately equipped will provide much of this capability and should be down to the platoon level

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SUSPECT BEHIND WALL
SPLASH FROM SHOT

Observations – Firepower

- The Capability To Deliver Firepower (Direct and Indirect) In Adverse Conditions Must Never Be Forgotten
  - Just because we cannot fly and observe or kill the Enemy, does not mean that he will respect this limitation on us
    - All weather systems and teams are the key
      - RISTA
      - Effective Direct Fire Mated to RISTA
      - Mortars/Field Artillery

Observations - Firepower

- But…….
  - Rules of Engagement and employment of assets should mirror systems capabilities
    - Direct Fire Systems must match the capabilities of Observation Systems
      - Why see something if you don’t have a response capability to engage and destroy the target
    - Delivery and Control of Unobserved fires
      - Through Target Acquisition Radars
      - Surveillance Radars
      - Electronic Warfare Systems

SURVEILLANCE VIDEO CAPTURE OF 107MM ROCKET LAUNCH

Observations – Firepower

- Collective Training is a Must
  - Must be Continuous and Appropriate to All Elements
    - FIST, ETAC, Engineers and Logisticians need to train with the other component parts to ensure awareness of skills on both sides
    - Weak Links cannot be tolerated in any component parts, exposure to equipment, doctrine and training ensures that everyone is a Warfighter!

Observations – Firepower

- Coalition Partners Must Ensure Training Standards Are Recognized By Key Allies
  - Control of Fixed Wing Aircraft
    - Not an issue with Aviation

Observations – Firepower

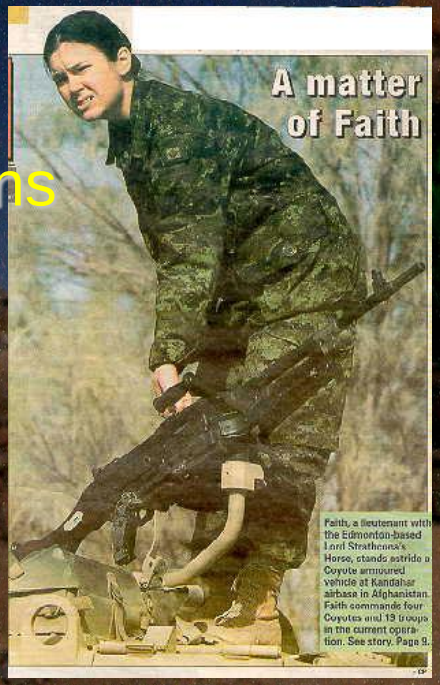
- Communications
  - Appropriate and compatible communications equipment is a must for ensuring access to Firepower
    - Secure or Datalink
      - Frequency Hoping Compatible
    - Should be addressed by any coalition partner hoping to work shoulder to shoulder with the US

Observations – Combat Supplies = Firepower

- Sustainment over 12 Time zones was difficult
  - Use of Civilian Courier Service to expedite delivery
- Like it or Not, Batteries Need to Be Considered as a Combat Supply Item
  - Without our Night Vision and Communications Equipment we become a World War II Army

Observations – Firepower For The Domestic Front

- Embracing the Media Works!
  - Tell Canadian Stories to Canadians
  - A Link for the Families At Home



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QUESTIONS